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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION  
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HIGHLIGHTS FROM MARKET NEWS REVIEWS  
Week ending September 22, 1944

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FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Apples: Last week HIGHLIGHTS indicated that the 1944 U.S. commercial apple crop was estimated at 38 percent above that for 1943. This did not take into consideration the wind storm of September 14 which caused some damage to the apple crop near the Atlantic coast. Estimates of the total loss have not yet been completed.

In the Western Region, the apple crop is progressing satisfactorily. Harvest of the Gravenstein crop in California has been completed. Bellflower, Jonathan, Delicious, Winter Banana and other fall maturing varieties are now being harvested.

During the past week, fall apples on the wholesale markets sold at 6 to 9 cents per pound, with the most of them going at 7 to 8 cents per pound for place pack stock.

Pears: Carlot movement of pears in the United States is now approximately 90 percent of that for last year at the same time. Washington shipments are 132 percent greater than last year, while Oregon has moved 17 percent more and California has moved 38 percent less. Processors in California are still under their "take" last year, by rail, by 28 percent.

Varieties now on western wholesale markets are Bartletts, Bosc, D'Anjou and Seckel.

Top wholesale prices are 10 cents per pound for packed and wrapped extra fancy and fancy grades of Bartletts and D'Anjous. Top prices for loose pack stock were 5 to 6 cents per pound.

On five eastern auction markets, prices for Bartletts ranged from \$3.20 to \$5.01 per box, and averaged \$4.03 per box.

Grapes: Carlot shipments of grapes to date this season total 6,221 cars, and averaged 295 cars per day from California during the past seven days. Total shipments include all varieties for all states.

F.o.b. shipping point prices indicate a strong tendency to remain at or very near the ceiling on table stock and from \$1.95 to \$2.05 per 28 pound lug. Juice stock held at \$155 to \$165 per ton for black grapes, \$175 to \$185 for Muscats and \$140 to \$155 for other white stock.

Wholesale prices averaged between 6 and 8 cents per pound for most table stock on the western markets, with Muscats, Tokays and Ribiers going at the top prices. Some Concord were in all markets, at prices from 6 to 8½ cents per pound.

Cantaloups: Shipments of cantaloups have decreased further this last week and the demand in most of the markets is not so strong as for previous weeks. F.o.b. shipping point prices were mostly \$2.80 per crate for jumbo 36's and \$2.50 per crate for 27's and 45's jumbo size.



Onions: In the Pacific Northwest and intermountain states, onion supplies are now characterized as "being too many". Demand is not keeping up with the increased amounts on the markets. Indications are that storage space for onions may soon be at a premium. Shipments this past week have increased 17 percent above those for the week previous, to a daily average of 165 cars. Slow demand has retarded harvesting and in many places growers are holding the crop in the ground to take advantage of increases in size and possible selling conditions later in the season.

In the Northwest, wholesale prices on Sweet Spanish onions were  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 cents per pound and Yellows were 2 to 3 cents per pound, while in the Southwest prices were generally 1 cent higher.

Potatoes: Harvest of the potato crop in the late producing areas of the Western Region is now increasing, and supplies on the wholesale market are slowly meeting demand. Prices for long whites (U.S. No.1) in 100-lb bags have ranged from \$3.25 in the Northwest as a top price, to \$3.65 in the California market. Netted gems (U.S. No.1) on the California markets topped at \$3.60 per 100 lbs. and in the Northwest at \$3.62. Daily shipments of potatoes by rail are now running over a 1000 cars per day.

Sweet Potatoes: Sweet potatoes on the northwestern wholesale markets have been below demand and limited in supply. Prices on California Jerseys were quoted at \$3.75 per 50-lb. tub on the northwestern markets while on the California markets they were going at prices ranging from 6 to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  cents per lb.

Tomatoes: Fresh tomatoes on the wholesale markets in the Northwest, particularly in Washington, were low in supply and were selling at \$3.25 to \$3.50 per lug for both California and Washington-grown stock. On the California markets, packed and wrapped stock 6 by 6 good stock sold at a top price of \$3.00.

#### DAIRY AND POULTRY

Butter: Butter production is continuing to decline. However, supplies of butter for civilian trade may possibly be increased and at least the tight situation may be considerably relieved as a result of the set-aside having been lifted for the month of October. All markets report demand very much in excess of present and available supply.

Eggs: The wholesale egg market during the past week has developed more strength and prices have advanced in some of the markets, particularly the Northwest, as much as 2 cents on Grade A smalls and up to 4 cents on Grade A large and AA.

While prices did not show such a wide margin of increase in the Southwest market, demand had increased to such an extent that there was a better market for smalls.

Poultry: The new crop of turkeys is being moved into dressing plants and receipts of other poultry, particularly in the Northwest, were being regulated to make room for turkey operations. A demand for friers and broilers held prices at ceiling levels. All supplies appear to be readily absorbed, with paying prices f.o.b. shipping point holding at 29 to 31 cents per pound.

#### LIVESTOCK AND MEATS

Cattle: Receipts of cattle on the twelve markets increased during the past week  $5\frac{1}{2}$  percent above receipts for the previous week. Receipts of steers on all the

markets were in the minority, while fat range cows and heifer predominated. Top prices for good cows were up to \$12.00, showing relatively little change from last week. Top prices for good heifers were \$11.50 to \$12.50, being approximately 50 cents on the average less than for last week. Good vealers (300 to 400 lbs.) went at a top of \$14.50. Fresh meat supplies into the retail trade channels increased during the week. Supplies of pork on the western markets sold at ceiling.

Hogs: Receipts of hogs on the Twelve principal markets continued to decrease and were down another 2 percent from last week's receipts. Barrows and gilts of 180 to 240 lbs. (support weight) were holding at a top of \$15.75 cwt.

Sheep: Receipts of sheep on the twelve markets were up  $17\frac{1}{2}$  percent. Prices on the western markets showed a slight decrease to as much as 50 cents below last week. Top prices for good to choice wool lambs brought up to \$14.00, and spring lambs as high as \$12.00 in the Pacific Northwest. Storms in some portion of the raising areas have no doubt been responsible for the heavier movement of sheep to market.

#### GRAIN PRODUCTS

Wheat: Winter wheat planting is progressing rapidly and quite satisfactorily in most of the belt. However in some sections the planting has been slightly delayed by rainy weather. Rain also caused a delay in the harvesting and threshing of wheat in the North Dakota area and some sections of the belt farther east. The harvesting program in the Pacific Northeast and all the inter-mountain sections has been practically completed. In the Middle Western markets, prices for hard wheat have advanced as much as  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents per bushel during the past week. Cash prices on the Portland Grain Exchange did not reflect the increase in prices on the mid-western markets. However, for ordinary hard red winter the price held fairly steady at \$1.43. In San Francisco, prices remain unchanged over the previous week. Production of wheat feeds for July is reported to have been the largest since 1936, while for this past week the production amounted to an 11 percent increase over the previous week, about the same as that for the same week one year ago.

Corn: The corn crop for the United States is estimated to be a near-record crop this year. The total production is estimated at 3,101,319,000 bushels. For the Western Region states, the total crop is estimated at 12,541,000 bushels compared with a 1933-42 average of 2,369,384,000 bushels for the U.S. and 13,291,000 bushels for the Western Region.

